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REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 28 has been amended to improve readability. No new matter has been entered.

The application is currently subject to an election requirement between 5 identified species. However, the Action does not articulate its rationale as to why restriction between the identified species is appropriate, for example, by providing any reason as to why there would be a serious burden in searching all of the identified species. That there would not be such a burden is suggested by the disclosed relationship between several of the identified species. More specifically, Figure 1 depicts an expansion module 10, and Figure 8 depicts a device 61 including a plurality of such modules 10. Likewise, Figure 10 depicts an expansion module 80, and Figure 12 depicts devices including a plurality of such modules 80. Accordingly, withdrawal of the election of species requirement is respectfully requested.

Applicant also respectfully disagrees with the assessment that no claims are generic, as it is believed that at least independent claims 1, 10, 15, 20 and 28 are sufficiently generic as to the depicted expansion modules and/or devices constructed therefrom as contemplated by the disclosure.

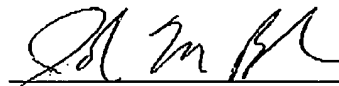
Nonetheless, as requested, Applicant hereby elects the species depicted in Figure 12, with traverse. As noted above, Figure 12 depicts devices including the expansion module 80 of Figure 10. Accordingly, it is respectfully suggested that at least claims 1-24 and 27-28 are readable on the species depicted in Figure 12. Moreover, it is respectfully suggested that while the module 80 is depicted in Figures 10 and 12 as having locking means 86 that are integral with module 80, the disclosure plainly contemplates that locking means 86 could also be

provided via attachment of a compression coupling 24 per Figures 1 and 3. Accordingly, it is believed that claims 25 and 26 are also readable on the species of Figure 12 as contemplated by the disclosure.

If there are any remaining issues that can be addressed by phone or otherwise, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned directly.

Respectfully submitted,

By:



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